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ECONOMICAL MARKETING:

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A radio talk delivered by Miss Jean Stewart, Home Economist, Bureau of Home Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, during the Western Farm and Home Hour Friday, February 27, 1932, through Station KGO and eight other stations associated with the NBC-KGO network, Pacific Division, National Broadcasting Company.

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From all the letters and requests coming to the Bureau of Home Economics, it's plain to be seen that economy is the subject most frequently on the housewife's mind these days. And her continual problem is: How to buy a well-balanced diet for the least money?

Miss Medora Ward of the Economics Division of the Bureau has been keeping tab on food prices for the last year and she brings the news that many foods are down to pre-war levels in price or lower. Here are Miss Ward's own words on the subject:

"Today you can buy quite a number of foods at 1913 prices. For example, lard, eggs, butter and rice are all much lower than in 1913. Fresh pork, some of the inexpensive beef cuts, flour, sugar, potatoes and cheese are very close to their 1913 prices.

"If you are thinking in terms of food groups needed for a well-balanced diet you can find very low-priced foods in each group. In fact, I believe that's the way to start. When you go marketing, carry in your mind a picture of the needs of your family in terms of the groups of foods needed for adequate nutrition. First, there's milk. Then come vegetables and fruits; the cereal group including breadstuffs; the sweets and fats; and eggs, meat, fish and other protein foods.

"You know how much money you have to spend for food. The nutrition specialists can tell you exactly how best to divide up your food dollar among the different groups of food. Then keep your eyes open for the low-priced items within each group and set a limit on how much you can afford to spend for a food of that kind. Setting a definite limit for each group keeps me from buying many foods which tempt me, but which I know I can't afford.

"If you watch prices you can find a long list of fruits and vegetables costing ten cents a pound or less. During the past year, at one time or another, there were at least 65 fruits and vegetables on this list. When the family grows a bit weary of potatoes, cabbage, apples and some of the other year-round standbys, give them a treat by serving foods in season.

"Also there are a surprising number of different cuts of meat and different varieties of fresh fish at less than 20 cents a pound. Of course, meat, fish and egg prices vary quite a bit with the different seasons.

"Cereal prices change little with the different seasons, but there are often special sales on cereals. If you keep posted on the regular prices, you will recognize the bargains when they come. I always compare the per pound prices of the different cereals, as they all have approximately the same food

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value. If I can save money by buying some cereals in bulk, I buy that way. Some of the packed cereals come in several sizes. I get the larger sized package, for I save money that way. You certainly can get a lot of food for a small amount of money if you choose your cereals wisely. Rice isn't the only bargain cereal now. Macaroni and some of the wheat, corn and oat cereals are lower than they have been for years."

Another question housewives often ask is: Is it wise to buy canned foods and non-perishable staples in large quantities?

Here is Miss Ward's reply to that question:

"When prices are stable or going up, then it's a good plan to buy non-perishable foods in as large a quantity as you can store conveniently. When prices are falling, it's better to buy only what you need for a short time.

"In buying canned goods, be sure to read the label. Some canned goods are now marked with quality grades. The highest grade of fruits and vegetables is called 'fancy'. The second grade of fruits is called 'choice.' And the second grade of vegetables is called 'extra standard.' The third grade for both is 'standard.' These are the grades that you'll meet most often in the market. All canned goods are also marked with the net weight of the contents, as you have been told by the Food and Drug Administration people. This net weight includes the sirup around the fruit and the liquid with the vegetables. In general, when you consider the cost of canned goods pound for pound, the larger can is the better buy. The most popular size can of vegetables is the No. 2 which holds about a pound and a quarter. For fruits, the popular size is No. 2 1/2, which holds about a pound and three quarters."

That's all today of Miss Ward's good suggestions on buying foods to get the most for your money.

Our menu today is an inexpensive dinner. Stuffed flank steak; Browned potatoes; Mixed greens -- these are different greens cooked and served together; Tomato salad; and, Boston cream pie. In Boston, you know, people often believe in being a bit different from the rest of the world. Maybe that's why Boston cream pie isn't really a pie at all. It's a cake with a sweet cream filling.

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